



HF Happenings 781

Volume 15, Issue 44, the week of 22 January 2018

INTERNATIONAL MORSE CODE

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DXCC News (New Criterion for Political Entities)

Thanks to "The Daily DX" for sending out the following report [edited], "Starting after the ARRL Board meeting today (20 January 2018) a new DXCC criterion will be added to Section II for Political Entities (point 1). Currently there are three criteria for Political Entities. If any one of the following three criteria are met the entity qualifies as a Political Entity on the DXCC list:

- 1) United Nations Member State
- 2) Prefix is on ITU callsign prefix block
- 3) "The entity contains a permanent population, is administered by a local government and is located at least 800 km from its parent."

To satisfy the "permanent population" and "administered by a local government" criteria of this sub-section, an Entity must be listed on either (a) the US Department of State's list of "Dependencies and Areas of Special Sovereignty" www.state.gov/s/inr/rls/10543.htm as having a local "Administrative Centre," or (b) the United Nations list of "Non-Self-Governing Territories" www.un.org/en/decolonization/nonsselfgoverningterritories.shtml.

The new criterion, which goes into effect after the BOD meeting, will be if the potential entity is a member society of the IARU www.iaru.org/member-societies.html and is listed on the United States Department of State Independent States of the World list www.state.gov/s/inr/rls/4250.htm. The Entity must be on both lists to qualify as a Political Entity. QRX for the exact timing that the new rule will go into effect.

Amendment to ARRL DXCC Rules Will Expand DXCC List

The ARRL Board of Directors approved a motion to amend the DXCC Rules, when it met January 19 - 20. Section II, Subsection 1 of the DXCC Rules now will include a new Subsection (d): The entity has a separate IARU member society and is included on the US State Department Independent States in the World www.state.gov/s/inr/rls/4250.htm.

"The discussion during the Board meeting and the rule change did not address any specific entity," ARRL Radiosport Manager Norm Fusaro, W3IZ, said. "The amendment could allow some additions to the current DXCC List of entities. It's a good thing not only for DXCC but for all active hams."

In fact, the Republic of Kosovo (Z6) has been added to the DXCC List of current entities, increasing the total number of current DXCC entities to 340. The addition of Kosovo raises to 331 the required number of current entities confirmed to qualify for DXCC Honour Roll; Top of Honour Roll is 340. DXCC award accounts are being tabulated to reflect the change.

This change qualifies as an "event," effective at 00:00 UTC on 21 January 2018. Nothing is retroactive.

A new Logbook of The World (LoTW) TSQL configuration file (v.11.4) will be released on 23 January. TSQL will detect when this file has been released and will install the update automatically. Radio Amateurs outside of Kosovo should continue to upload their logs to LoTW in the usual manner. LoTW users within Kosovo

You can now download your copy of HF Happenings from www.sarl.org.za/hf_happenings.asp

January 2018

- 1 – New Year's Day; start of the 2018 CQ DX Marathon and the ARRL International Grid Chase
- 6 – Pretoria ARC Flea Market
- 13 and 14 – Hunting Lions in the Air
- 17 – Provincial school open
- 19 to 21 – PEARS National VHF/UHF Contest
- 20 – SDR Workshop at the NARC
- 20 and 21 – IPA Classic Car and Bike Show, Cape Town
- 20 to 28 – ZS6SRC: 30 years in Amateur radio
- 25 – Closing date for the February Radio ZS
- 27 – Summer QRP contest; Cape Town ARC meeting; International Day of Commemoration in Memory of the Victims of the Holocaust
- 30 – Closing date for proposals and synopsis for AMSAT SA Space Symposium papers
- 31 – Closing date for Nominations for Council, SARL Awards and AGM Motions

(either with a Z6 call sign or reciprocal call sign Z6/home call sign) will use TQSL to request a new call sign certificate for their call sign. The request will use Republic of Kosovo as the DXCC entity, and the QSO Begin date will be 21 January or later. LoTW will reject call sign certificate requests for the Republic of Kosovo with a QSO Begin date prior to 21 January. Z6 users requesting call sign certificates may e-mail a copy of their Amateur Radio license to, LoTW-Help@arrl.org.

Kosovo's IARU member society SHRAK www.shrak.org/en/ and its president Vjollca Caka, Z61VB, are hosting a 10th anniversary activation to celebrate Kosovo's independence in February 2008.

SHRAK Headquarters station Z60A now is active on several bands with multiple guest operators. Club Log will be used for this activation, while QSLs are via OH2BH.

The Summer QRP Contest

The QRP contest is intended to be a fun activity to promote QRP operation between radio amateurs using homebuilt equipment or operating as a portable/field station and using temporary antennas. This is encouraged but is not a requirement.

The Summer QRP Contest takes place from 12:00 to 15:00 UTC on Saturday 27 January 2018 using Phone and CW with 5 watts (PEP) output or less and there are no antenna restrictions. The first hour is limited to the 40-m band only, the remaining two hours the contestants are free to use any HF (non-WARC) band as they see fit.

The exchange is a RS or RST report and your 6-figure Grid locator, you can also include your SOTA or Fauna and Flora reference number. Each QSO counts 1 point and there are Prefix or Country multipliers as well as station type multipliers. You log in ADIF, Cabrillo or MS Excel format with a summary sheet and labelled "my call sign QRP Contest," must be submitted by 3 February 2018 by e-mail to contest@sarl.org.za. And do not forget the photos of your station in action that must accompany the log entry. Consult the 2018 SARL Blue Book for the complete set of rules.

Helpful FT8 Operating Guide

Gary, ZL2IFB has published his "FT8 Operating Guide", described as "a collection of pragmatic tips that takes over where the WSJT-X help and installation notes leave off." It is "specifically aimed at HF DXers" www.g4ifb.com/FT8_Hinson_tips_for_HF_DXers.pdf.

It started out as my rough notes as I fumbled around with the new mode", he says. "Those grew steadily over the past few months, absorbing information, advice and helpful hints from many sources including plenty of encouraging comments on the web version. I've peppered it with screen shots, quotes, comments and ideas, and given it a little structure. It's still not entirely 'finished' (partly because the operating techniques and software are still evolving) but I wanted to get it out there ahead of Bouvet, so those who intend to have a go at working 3Y0Z on FT8 have a chance to read and practice their skills, honing their techniques before the Main Event.

Feedback welcome, especially corrections and further tips... such as how we are going to cope with 3Y0Z's extra wide splits, and wall-to-wall continuous callers".

ARRRRRRRRRRRRRRRR!



Pirate Alert

Champ, E21EIC/XW1IC, informs that HS/RA4AR is pirate. He does not have license and is operating illegally in Thailand.

February

- 3 – Closing date for the Summer QRP logs; the East Rand Club's flea market
- 4 - AWA CW Activity Day; World Cancer Day
- 10 and 11 – National Field Day and the CQ WPX RTTY contest
- 11 – International Day for Women and Girls in Science
- 13 – World Radio Day
- 14 – Valentine's Day
- 15 – Closing date for PEARS VHF Logs
- 16 to 18 – KykNET Buite-expo, Western Cape, Môreson Farm, Malmesbury
- 17 - SARL Youth Sprint; Pretoria ARC rally communications at HMC
- 17 and 18 - ARRL DX CW Contest
- 19 - Closing date for Nation Field Day logs and AWA CW logs
- 21 – at 05:00 on 21 February 1917, the sinking of the SS Mendi
- 22 – closing date for the March Radio ZS
- 23 to 25 – Beeld Holiday Show, Gallagher Convention Centre
- 24 and 25 – Clarens Beer Festival
- 24 – closing date Youth logs; West Rand Flea market and CTARC meeting
- 25 – SARL Digital Contest



St Patrick's Day

In Ireland we traditionally celebrate St Patrick's Day on 17 March (*coincides with my wedding anniversary!*) But with radio we go world-wide by getting on air following the time zones as people celebrate across the globe from 12:00 on 16 March until 12:00 on 18 March. So why not take part in this fun e-award and help turn the bands green for St Patrick's Day.

For more information go to <http://stpatrickaward.webs.com>



New SOTA Associations 2017

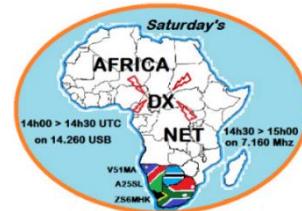
Fifteen new SOTA associations were added during the year 2017, bringing the total to 136. These were

Code	Association Name	Manager	Active from	Regions	Summits
IA	Isole Africane d'Italia		1 October 2017	2	3
4X	Israel	Richard, 4Z4DR	1 September 2017	2	25
XE1	Mexico - Central	José, XE2N	1 September 2017	14	4545
VO2	Canada - Labrador	Someone, VO2TEST	1 August 2017	0	0
VY1	Canada - Yukon	Scott, VY1CO	1 August 2017	1	310
FM	Martinique	Robert, F5HTR	1 July 2017	1	15
FP	St. Pierre & Miquelon	Robert, F5HTR	1 July 2017	1	4
VO1	Canada - Newfoundland	Loren, VO1OE	1 July 2017	5	329
CX	Uruguay	Daniel, CX1FU	1 June 2017	3	18
FG	Guadeloupe	Robert, F5HTR	1 June 2017	4	19
FH	Mayotte	Robert, F5HTR	1 June 2017	4	11
EA9	Ceuta	Javier, EA9AI	1 April 2017	1	1
OY	Faroës	Simon, G4TJC	1 April 2017	1	108
VY2	Canada - PEI	George, VY2GF	1 April 2017	1	2
ZB2	Gibraltar	Simon, GBTC	1 April 2017	1	1

Planning and documentation is already at an advanced stage for several newer associations that will be added during 2018. For any countries not yet represented, the SOTA Management Team is happy to provide advice and support in the aim of bringing qualifying areas into the global programme. Please get in touch via <http://www.sota.org.uk/Contact>

African DX

Contacts with stations on the African continent count towards the SARL's All Africa Award.



African Tour. Sadao, JA1PBV, is currently active as 9X2S from Kigali, Rwanda until 23 January. From there he will travel back to Entebbe, Uganda and be active as 5X2S until 29 January, before heading home. Activity from both places have been on 20 and 17 metres using CW and FT8. QSL via JA1PBV or ClubLog's QRSS.

Guinea Bissau, J5. Livio, IZ3BUR, is on a mission to support a "Books for High School of Cumara" project from 24 January to 21 February. During his spare time, he plans to operate as J52EC from Gianfranco's (J520FM) QTH. QSL via IZ3BUR.

Togo, 5V. John, N9MDH operates as 5V1JE until the end of May from Lome with a focus on the WARC bands and digital modes. QSL via N9MDH, direct or via the bureau and LoTW.

Namibia, V5. Rudi, DK7PE, will be active as V5/DK7PE from Omaruru between 24 and 30/31 January. Activity will have an emphasis on 160 and 60 meters, including participation in the CQ WW 160 m CW Contest (26 to 28 January). Rudi states, "You may QSL direct, but please do not send any IRCS for return postage. I do not need a QSL, so you can use PayPal and send me the contact details. If the QSO is OK in my log, I will send you the confirmation. This way may also be used for my older DXpeditions! Please use www.paypal.me/DK7PE." Watch his home page for possible updates www.roody.de

Zimbabwe, Z2 (Update). Rune, LA7THA, Arne, LA7WCA and Thor, LA9VPA will be active as Z2LA between 2 and 11 March. Activity will be holiday style on various HF bands (160 – 10 m) using CW, SSB and the digital modes. QSL via ClubLog's OQRS, M0OXO or his OQRS. Visit their new Web site at www.la9vpa.com/z2la

African Islands

IOTA frequencies

CW: 28 040 24 920 21 040 18 098 14 040 10 114 7 030 3 530 kHz

SSB: 28 560 28 460 24 950 21 260 18 128 14 260 7 055 3 760 kHz

Mozambique, C9. Johannes, PA5X and Gerben, PG5M are going to activate Ibu Island (AF-061, Cabo Delgado District) from 28 January to 5 February as C8X and C81G on 80 to 10 m, including 60 m on CW, SSB, and FT8. QSL for C81G via PG5M or ClubLog, C8X via PA5X, direct or via the bureau.

Comoros, D6. Giovanni/IK5BCM, Giuseppe/IK5CBE, and Giovanni/IK5CRH will be active as D68I from the Comoros (AF-007) between 29 January and 10 February with CW, SSB and digital modes on 80 to 10 m. QSL via IK5CRH.

Mozambique, C96/C98, (2 IOTA Op/Update). Members of the Russian Robinson Club (RRC) will be active as C96RRC (AF-088) and C98RRC (AF-066). Operators mentioned are Vasily, R7AL, Vasily, RA1ZZ, Al, RZ3K, Vlad, RK8A and Aleksei, RN3BZ. The pilot station will be Victor, UA3AKO. Their tentative schedule is as follows - 29 April to 3 May from Mozambique Island (AF-088) as C96RRC and 5 to 9 May from Inhaca Island (AF-066) as C98RRC

Activity will be on 40, 30, 20, 17, 15, 10 meters using CW, SSB and the digital modes. QSL via R7AL or ClubLog's OQRS (preferred). Added note: In 2018 the RRC is celebrating their 25th anniversary of "Russian Robinson Club". They now have a Web page online at <https://dxdexpedition.wixsite.com/mozambique>

3B7A St Brandon Island DXpedition News (Press Release #5) [edited]. An updated most wanted list has been published on Clublog. It now shows Saint Brandon as the 27th most wanted entity worldwide (#19 NA, #17 SA, #33 AS, #28 OC, #34 AF, #48 EU). This statistic clearly confirms the relevance of our DXpedition, we knew the demand to be high more than 10 years after 3B7C.

Same as with our previous projects, we know a flawless preparation is the key of the success. We are now working carefully on propagation fore- cast. Of course, our experience of this area is a big advantage, we know some specifics tips, possible openings, etc. These forecasts will drive our operations from the first to the very last day, giving priority to the area with the shortest and most difficult conditions.

We would like to thank our pilot team - Bjorn, ON9CFG, Paul, N6PSE, Javi, LU5FF, Joe, JJ3PRT, and our "chief pilot" Michel, F6AGM (ex-FM5CD). Please share your experience and all interesting information with your local pilot during the expedition. We will be in touch with them daily thanks to our satellite phone.

The pilots will NOT have access to the logs! Questions related to your QSOs should be submitted to our QSL manager through the online form on our website. Do not expect answer until we are back in France.

We would like to take advantage of this communication to wish good luck to our 3Y0Z friends on the way to Bouvet.

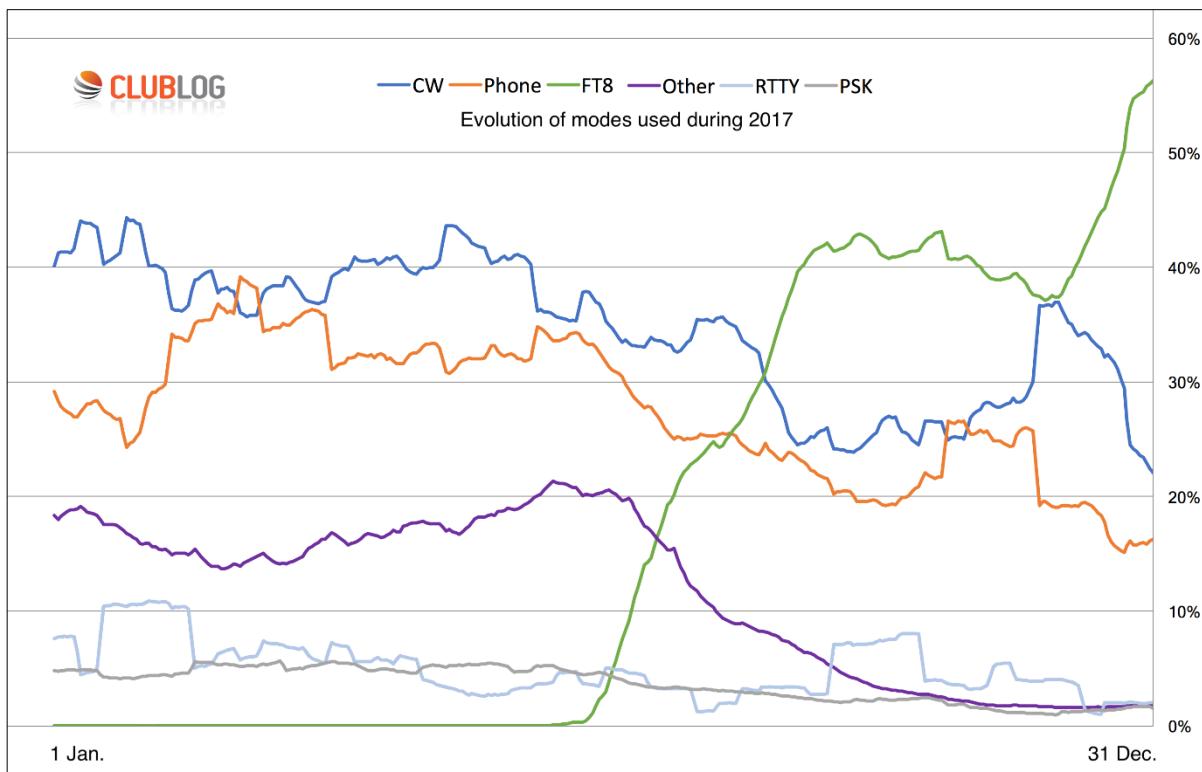
Please keep on supporting our project on our website www.saintbrandondx.com/en/how-to-help-us/ and follow us on Facebook www.facebook.com/SaintBrandonDX/ and Twitter @SaintBrandonDX

The results of the 2017 IARU HF Contest

The 'full results' article for the 2017 IARU HF Contest <http://www.arrl.org/iaru-hf-championship> are now available via the ARRL results articles web page <http://www.arrl.org/contest-results-articles>. The article, written by Doug, K1DG, discusses the number of operators that travelled to take part in this contest, including many that may be competing in the WRTC 2018 event in July.

Clublog's Annual Report

Clublog's founder Michael, G7VJR, published an 'annual report' of mode usage as reflected by the uploads of contacts to the Clublog service <http://g7vjr.org/2018/01/proportion-of-modes-used-on-the-air-2017-update/>. According to Michael, "2017 was, of course, the year when digital modes changed forever with the advent of FT8. It is a remarkable technical achievement which has breathed life and enthusiasm into DXing for a whole new audience."



A graph of the breakdown of QSO percentage by mode for over 8 000 users of Clublog during 2017. FT8 usage has exploded. [Image courtesy of Clublog.org]

Operating Tip

Changing A Window Location to Avoid a Pain in the Neck. This tip was prompted by a story appearing in the Northern California Contest Club's (NCCC) December 2017 JUG newsletter (PDF) <http://nccc.cc/jug/2017/12Dec2017.pdf>. Sometimes just moving a window on the screen of your monitor can change your posture enough to reduce or eliminate operator pain or fatigue. Hank, W6SX, experienced neck pain after a RTTY contest, which he solved by changing his screen layout. He moved his logger's RTTY decoding window to a location higher on this computer monitor, which changed his neck position, and got rid of the ache.

Bonus: If you need to display a website but it's not in your language, try using Google Translate (<http://translate.google.com>). Just type the URL into the Google Translate page, and you can choose the target language if it is not detected automatically. (Do not trust Google Translate – I have seen how it translates from English to Afrikaans – not a pretty sight!)

Contest Calendar

This week's contests as compiled by Bruce Horn, WA7BNM. The period covered is 22 to 29 January 2018

Classic Exchange, CW

13:00 UTC 21 January to 08:00 UTC 22 January and
13:00 UTC 23 January to 08:00 UTC 24 January

Geographic Focus: Worldwide

Participation: Worldwide

Mode: CW

Bands: 160, 80, 40, 20, 15, 10, 6, 2 m

Classes: (none)

Exchange: Name, RST, state, province or country and
rcvr/xmtr manuf/model

Work stations: Once per band per mode per rcr/xmtr
manuf/model

QSO Points: (see rules)

Multipliers: (see rules)

Score Calculation: Total score = sum (total mode QSO points x total mode mults) and Bonus Points

Submit logs by: 30 April 2018

E-mail logs to: k2rp@arrl.net

Mail logs to: K2RP, 659 Shanas Lane, Encinitas, CA
92024, USA

Find rules at: <http://www.classicexchange.org/jan18/jan18ann.html>

Run for the Bacon QRP Contest

02:00 - 04:00 UTC 22 January

Geographic Focus: Worldwide

Participation: Worldwide

Mode: CW

<p>Bands: 160, 80, 40, 20, 15, 10 m Classes: Single Band; All Band Max power: 5 watts Exchange: RST, state, province or country and member no or power Work stations: Once per band QSO Points: 1 point per QSO with non-member; 3 points per QSO with member on same continent; 5 points per QSO with member on different continent Multipliers: Each state, province, or country once; Multiply mults by 2 if >50 members worked Score Calculation: Total score = total QSO points x total mults Submit logs by: 28 January 2018 E-mail logs to: (none) Upload log at: http://qrpcontest.com/pigrun/autolog.php Mail logs to: (none) Find rules at: http://qrpcontest.com/pigrun/</p>	<p>Multipliers: Each state, province, or country once; Key Type Mult: 2 x if straight key, 1.5 x if bug, 1 x if other Score Calculation: Total score = total QSO points x total mults x key type mult Submit logs by: 23:59 UTC 27 January 2018 E-mail logs to: naqcc33@windstream.net jcoreyc@gmail.com Upload log at: http://naqcc.info/sprint_submit_log.html Mail logs to: (none) Find rules at: http://naqcc.info/sprint/sprint201801_160.html</p>
<p>SKCC Sprint 00:00 - 02:00 UTC 24 January Geographic Focus: Worldwide Participation: Worldwide Awards: Worldwide Mode: CW Bands: 160, 80, 40, 20, 15, 10 m Classes: (none) Exchange: RST, state, province or country, name and SKCC no or power Work stations: Once per band QSO Points: (see rules) Multipliers: Each state, province, or country once Score Calculation: Total score = (total QSO points x total mults) and bonus points Submit logs by: 23:59 UTC 26 January 2018 E-mail log summary to: (none) Post log summary at: http://www.skccgroup.com/operating_activities/weekday_sprint/submit-display.php Mail logs to: (none) Find rules at: http://www.skccgroup.com/operating_activities/weekday_sprint/</p>	<p>QRP Fox Hunt 02:00 - 03:30 UTC 24 January Geographic Focus: United States Participation: Worldwide Mode: CW Bands: 40 m Only Classes: Single Op - fox or hound Max power: 5 watts Exchange: RST, state, province or country, name and power output QSO Points: 1 point per QSO Multipliers: (none) Score Calculation: Total score = total QSO points Submit logs by: 03:30 UTC 25 January 2018 E-mail logs to: (see rules) Mail logs to: (none) Find rules at: http://www.qrpfoxyhunt.org/winter_rules.htm</p>
<p>NAQCC CW Sprint 01:30 UTC-03:30 UTC 24 January Geographic Focus: Worldwide Participation: Worldwide Mode: CW Bands: 160 m Only Classes: (none) Max power: 5 watts Exchange: RST and state, province or country and NAQCC no or power Work stations: Once per band QSO Points: 1 point per QSO with non-member; 2 points per QSO with member</p>	<p>Phone Fray 02:30 - 03:00 UTC 24 January Geographic Focus: North America Participation: Worldwide Mode: SSB Bands: 160, 80, 40, 20, 15 m Classes: Single Op Max power: 100 watts Exchange: NA: Name and state, province or country; non-NA: Name Work stations: Once per band QSO Points: NA station: 1 point per QSO; non-NA station: 1 point per QSO with an NA station Multipliers: Each US state (including KH6/KL7) once per band; Each VE province/territory once per band; Each North American country (except W/VE) once per band Score Calculation: Total score = total QSO points x total mults Submit logs by: 03:00 UTC 26 January 2018 E-mail logs to: (none) Post log summary at: http://www.3830scores.com Mail logs to: (none)</p>

<p>Find rules at: http://www.per-luma.com/Phone_Fray_Contest_Rules.pdf</p>	<p>Mail logs to: (none) Find rules at: http://www.qrpfoxhunt.org/winter_rules.htm</p>
<p>CWops Mini-CWT Test 13:00 - 14:00 UTC and 19:00 - 20:00 UTC 24 January and 03:00 - 04:00 UTC 25 January Geographic Focus: Worldwide Participation: Worldwide Awards: Worldwide Mode: CW Bands: 160, 80, 40, 20, 15, 10 m Classes: Single Op - QRP, low or high Max power: HP: >100 watts; LP: 100 watts; QRP: 5 watts Exchange: Member: Name and member no; non-Member: Name and state, province or country Work stations: Once per band QSO Points: 1 point per QSO Multipliers: Each call once Score Calculation: Total score = total QSO points x total mults Submit logs by: 04:00 UTC 27 January 2018 Post log summary at: http://www.3830scores.com Mail logs to: (none) Find rules at: http://www.cwops.org/cwt.html</p>	<p>NCCC Sprint 02:30 - 03:00 UTC 26 January Geographic Focus: North America Participation: Worldwide Mode: CW Bands: (see rules) Classes: (none) Exchange: Serial no, name and QTH Score Calculation: Total score = total QSO points x total mults Submit logs by: 28 January 2018 E-mail logs to: (none) Post log summary at: http://www.3830scores.com Mail logs to: (none) Find rules at: http://www.ncccsprint.com/rules.html</p>
<p>NCCC RTTY Sprint 01:45 UTC-02:15 UTC 26 January Geographic Focus: North America Participation: Worldwide Mode: RTTY Bands: (see rules) Classes: (none) Exchange: Serial no, name and QTH Score Calculation: Total score = total QSO points x total mults Submit logs by: 28 January 2018 E-mail logs to: (none) Post log summary at: http://www.3830scores.com Mail logs to: (none) Find rules at: http://www.ncccsprint.com/rttyns.html</p>	<p>CQ 160-Meter CW Contest 22:00 UTC 26 January to 22:00 UTC 28 January Geographic Focus: Worldwide Participation: Worldwide Awards: Worldwide Mode: CW Bands: 160 m Only Classes: Single Op - QRP, low or high; Single Op Assisted - high; Multi-Op - high Max operating hours: Single Op: 30 hours; Multi-Op: 40 hours Max power: HP: >150 watts; LP: 150 watts; QRP: 5 watts Exchange: W/VE: RST and state or province; DX: RST and CQ Zone QSO Points: 2 points per QSO with own country; 5 points per QSO with other countries on same continent; 10 points per QSO with other continents; 5 points per QSO with maritime mobile Multipliers: Each US state and DC (excluding KH6/KL7); Each VE province; Each DXCC and WAE country (including KH6/KL7) Score Calculation: Total score = total QSO points x total mults</p>
<p>QRP Fox Hunt 02:00 - 03:30 UTC 26 January Geographic Focus: United States Participation: Worldwide Mode: CW Bands: 80 m Only Classes: Single Op - fox or hound Max power: 5 watts Exchange: RST, state, province or country, name and power output QSO Points: 1 point per QSO Multipliers: (none) Score Calculation: Total score = total QSO points Submit logs by: 03:30 UTC 27 January 2018 E-mail logs to: (see rules)</p>	<p>Submit logs by: 22:00 UTC 2 February 2018 E-mail logs to: 160cw@cq160.com Mail logs to: CQ 160 Meter Contest, c/o N2NT, PO Box 25, Dayton, NJ 08810, USA Find rules at: http://www.cq160.com/rules.htm</p> <p>Montana QSO Party 00:00 - 24:00 UTC 27 January Geographic Focus: United States/Canada state/province QSO party Participation: Worldwide Mode: CW, Phone, Digital Bands: 160 to 70 cm</p>

Classes: Single Op - CW, phone, digital or mixed - QRP, low or high; Multi-Single - CW, phone, digital or mixed - QRP, low or high; Mobile/Rover - CW, phone, digital or mixed - QRP, low or high
 Max power: HP: >150 watts; LP: 150 watts; QRP: 5 watts
 Exchange: MT: RS(T) and county; non-MT: RS(T) and state, province or "DX"
 Work stations: Once per band per mode
 QSO Points: 1 point per SSB QSO; 2 points per CW/Digital QSO
 Multipliers: MT: Each state, province or MT county once per mode; Non-MT: Each MT county once per mode
 Power: >150 W: 1 X, 150 W: 2 X, QRP: 3 X
 Score Calculation: Total score = total QSO points x total mults x power mult
 Submit logs by: 3 February 2018
 E-mail logs to: MTQSOParty2018@tuscor.net
 Post log summary at: <http://fvarc.org/?q=MT-QSO-Entry>
 Mail logs to: (none)
 Find rules at: <http://fvarc.org/>

REF CW Contest
 06:00 UTC 27 January to 18:00 UTC 28 January
 Geographic Focus: France and overseas territories
 Participation: Worldwide
 Awards: Worldwide
 Mode: CW
 Bands: 80, 40, 20, 15, 10 m
 Classes: Single Op All Band - QRP, low or high; Single Op Single Band - QRP, low or high; Multi-Single - QRP, low or high; Club; SWL
 Max operating hours: Single Op: 28 hours in no more than 3 increments of at least 1 hour each
 Max power: HP: >100 Watts; LP: 100 Watts; QRP: 5 Watts
 Exchange: French: RST and Department/Prefix; non-French: RST and serial no
 Work stations: Once per band
 QSO Points: French: 6 points per QSO with French station same continent; French: 15 points per QSO with French station on different continent; French: 1 point per QSO with non-French station same continent; French: 2 points per QSO with non-French station on different continent; non-French: 1 point per QSO with French station same continent; non-French: 3 points per QSO with French station on different continent
 Multipliers: French/Corsica departments once per band; French overseas prefixes once per band; non-French DXCC countries once per band (available only to French stations)
 Score Calculation: Total score = total QSO points x total mults
 Submit logs by: 12 February 2018

E-mail logs to: (none)
 Upload log at: <http://concours.r-e-f.org/test/logs/upload-form>
 Mail logs to: (none)
 Find rules at: http://concours.r-e-f.org/reglements/actuels/reg_cdfhf_dx.pdf

BARTG RTTY Sprint
 12:00 UTC 27 January to 12:00 UTC 28 January
 Geographic Focus: Worldwide
 Participation: Worldwide
 Mode: RTTY
 Bands: 80, 40, 20, 15, 10 m
 Classes: Single Op Expert
 Single Op - QRP, low or high; Multi-Op; SWL
 Max power: HP: >100 W; LP: 100 W; QRP: 5 W
 Exchange: Serial no (no signal report)
 Work stations: Once per band
 QSO Points: 1 point per QSO
 Multipliers: DXCC countries once regardless of band; JA, W, VE and VK areas once regardless of band
 Score Calculation: Total score = total QSO points x total mults x continents
 Submit logs by: 4 February 2018
 E-mail logs to: (none)
 Upload log at: <http://bartg.rsgbcc.org/cgi-bin/hfenter.pl>
 Mail logs to: (none)
 Find rules at: <http://www.bartg.org.uk/sprintcontest.asp>

UBA DX SSB Contest
 13:00 UTC 27 January to 13:00 UTC 28 January
 Geographic Focus: Belgium
 Participation: Worldwide
 Awards: Europe
 Mode: SSB
 Bands: 80, 40, 20, 15, 10 m
 Classes: Single Op All Band - low or high; Single Op Single Band - low or high; Single Op QRP; Multi-Op; SWL
 Max power: HP: >100 watts; LP: 100 watts; QRP: 10 watts
 Exchange: ON: RST, serial no and province; non-ON: RST and serial no
 Work stations: Once per band
 QSO Points: 10 points per QSO with Belgian station; 3 points per QSO with other EU stations; 1 point per QSO with non-EU stations
 Multipliers: Each Belgian province once per band; Each Belgian prefix once per band; Each EU DXCC country once per band
 Score Calculation: Total score = total QSO points x total mults
 Submit logs by: 23:59 UTC 11 February 2018
 E-mail logs to: ubassb@uba.be
 Mail logs to: (none)

Find rules at: <http://www.uba.be/en/hf/contest-rules/uba-dx-contest-rules>

Winter Field Day
19:00 UTC 27 January to 19:00 UTC 28 January
Geographic Focus: Worldwide
Participation: Worldwide
Mode: Any (see rules for exceptions)
Bands: All, except WARC
Classes: Max Simultaneous Xmtrs and Site – indoor, outdoor or home
Max power: HP: >100 W; LP: 100 W; QRP: 5 W
Exchange: Category and ARRL Section or DX
QSO Points: 1 point per phone QSO; 2 points per CW/digital QSO; Bonus: 1 500 points if commercial

power not used; 1 500 points if outdoors; 1 500 points if not at home; 1 500 points for at least satellite QSO

Multipliers: One for each mode operated per band

Power: QRP: 4 x, LP: 2 x, HP: 1 x

Score Calculation: Total score = (total QSO points x band/mode mults x power mult) and bonus points

Submit logs by: 23:59 UTC 28 February 2018

E-mail logs to: wfda@winterfieldday.com

Post log summary at: (see rules)

Mail logs to: Tom Phelps, WD8MBE, 235 Leonard Ave NW, Massillon, OH 44646, USA

Find rules at: <https://www.winterfieldday.com/rules/>

Explore and decode RF digital signals

Universal Radio Hacker (URH) <https://github.com/jopohl/urh> is an open-source project that you can use in conjunction with SDR hardware to explore and decode RF digital signals. It helps you explore everything above and including the 'physical layer' of the protocol stack. Applications could include decoding the protocol a wireless doorbell is using, or getting your weather station's data into your PC using a cheap DVB-T dongle <https://www.rtl-sdr.com/reverse-engineering-weather-station-rf-signals-with-an-rtl-sdr/>.

Next Week's Contests

QRP Fox Hunt, 02:00 - 03:30 UTC 31 January
Phone Fray, 02:30 - 03:00 UTC 31 January
CWops Mini-CWT Test, 13:00 - 14:00 UTC and 19:00 - 20:00 UTC 31 January and 03:00 - 04:00 UTC 1 February
UKEICC 80 m Contest, 20:00 - 21:00 UTC 31 January
NRAU 10 m Activity Contest, 18:00 - 19:00 UTC (CW) and 19:00 - 20:00 UTC (SSB) and 20:00 - 21:00 UTC (FM) and 21:00 - 22:00 UTC 1 February (Dig)
NCCC RTTY Sprint, 01:45 - 02:15 UTC 2 February
QRP Fox Hunt, 02:00 - 03:30 UTC 2 February
NCCC Sprint, 02:30 - 03:00 UTC 2 February
YLRL YL-OM Contest, 14:00 UTC 2 February to 02:00 UTC 4 February
Vermont QSO Party, 00:00 UTC 3 February to 24:00 UTC 4 February
10-10 Int. Winter Contest, SSB, 00:01 UTC 3 February to 23:59 UTC 4 February
Mexico RTTY International Contest, 12:00 UTC 3 February to 23:59 UTC 4 February
Black Sea Cup International, 12:00 UTC 3 February to 11:59 UTC 4 February
F9AA Cup, CW, 12:00 UTC 3 February to 12:00 UTC 4 February
Minnesota QSO Party, 14:00 - 24:00 UTC 3 February
FYBO Winter QRP Sprint, 14:00 - 24:00 UTC 3 February
AGCW Straight Key Party, 16:00 - 19:00 UTC 3 February
British Columbia QSO Party, 16:00 UTC 3 February to 04:00 UTC 4 February and 16:00 - 24:00 UTC 4 February
FISTS Winter Slow Speed Sprint, 17:00 - 21:00 UTC 3 February
North American Sprint, CW, 00:00 - 04:00 UTC 4 February
RSGB 80 m Club Championship, SSB, 20:00 - 21:30 UTC 5 February
ARS Spartan Sprint, 02:00 - 04:00 UTC 6 February

Items used with acknowledgement to the ARRL Letter, the ARRL DX News, the ARRL Contest Update, OPDX Bulletin, 425 DX Bulletin, DXNL Newsletter, WIA-News, the RSGB News, DxCoffee, Southgate ARC News, DX World and the Amateur Radio Newsletter